

# **VIDEO POKER GAMES**

## **Cross-reference to Related Application**

1                  This application is based on and claims the benefit of  
2  
3 U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/319483, filed  
4 August 21, 2002, entitled "Video Poker Games."

5

6                  This invention relates primarily to video poker games,  
7 and more particularly to video poker games that are  
8 programmed to play on an electronic video poker machine.  
9 Based on achieving certain starting hand combinations, the  
10 player receives one or more extra hands on his next round of  
11 play. This process can continue to allow the extra hands to  
12 create additional extra hands.

13                For example, if the player receives a Three-of-a-Kind or  
14 better as a starting hand on a round of play, the player  
15 would earn a free extra hand on the next round of play. The  
16 player would make a wager to play the next round of video  
17 poker and both hands would be played as if they were carrying  
18 the same amount of wager, even though only one wager is made.

1 In effect, the player is playing the additional hand for no  
2 extra cost.

3 The player would have to make a bet on the first hand in  
4 the next round to receive the extra hand bonus. If the  
5 player then made two Three-of-a-Kinds or better on the next  
6 round he would receive two extra hands on the following round  
7 and would play a total of three hands all for the cost of a  
8 single wager.

9

10 **Background of the Invention**

11 Video poker that is played on an electronic video poker  
12 gaming machine is designed to replicate the play of a hand of  
13 poker. Typically, the player is not playing against any  
14 other player's hands or against a dealer's hand; the player  
15 is simply attempting to achieve the highest ranking poker  
16 hand possible from the cards displayed to the player. The  
17 higher the ranking of the poker hand achieved by the player,  
18 the greater the player's winnings based on the number of  
19 coins, tokens or credits wagered by the player. Typically, a  
20 payout schedule is posted on the gaming machine to advise the

1 player of the payoffs available for certain winning card  
2 combinations.

3 The forerunner of all electronic video poker gaming  
4 machines is the video Draw Poker machine that deals cards  
5 from a standard fifty-two card poker deck and displays a  
6 single five card hand to the player. The player then selects  
7 which of the five cards he wishes to hold (or discard  
8 depending on the format of the gaming machine). The draw  
9 poker machine then displays replacement cards for the cards  
10 the player has discarded. The player wins or loses based on  
11 conventional poker hand rankings for the resulting five card  
12 hand.

13 In video Draw Poker, the conventional poker hand  
14 rankings that are winning combinations are a Royal Flush, a  
15 Straight Flush, a Four of a Kind, a Full House, a Flush, a  
16 Straight, a Three of a Kind, a Two Pair and a Pair of Jacks  
17 or Better. A payout table is established based on the number  
18 of coins wagered by the player and the type of poker hand  
19 achieved.

20

1       The classic draw poker machine has been modified to use  
2 Jokers as wild cards or to use Deuces (or even other cards)  
3 as wild cards. "Jokers Wild" and "Deuces Wild" draw poker  
4 still display to the player a single five card hand and allow  
5 the player to discard unwanted cards and receive replacement  
6 cards. The payout table is modified to recognize the differ-  
7 ing odds for achieving various poker hands when wild cards  
8 are involved. Furthermore, different poker hand rankings are  
9 used in the pay table to recognize different winning  
10 combinations that can be achieved using wild cards.

11       There are many poker formats used in video draw poker.  
12 These poker game formats include Jacks (or even Tens) or  
13 Better Draw Poker, Bonus Poker, Double Bonus Poker, Double  
14 Double Bonus Poker, Super Double Bonus Poker, Triple Bonus  
15 Poker, Deuces Wild Poker, Jokers Wild Poker, Deuces and  
16 Jokers Wild Poker, etc. Many electronic video poker gaming  
17 machines are provided with a menu so that the player can  
18 indicate his choice of the poker game format that the player  
19 wishes to play and the player then makes his wager based on  
20 upon that choice of poker game format. Each poker format has

1 its own pay table associated therewith.

2 U.S. Patent No. 5,823,873 (Moody) (the disclosure of  
3 which is incorporated herein by this reference) describes an  
4 electronic video gaming machine and method in which the  
5 player may play multiple hands at the same time. The  
6 player makes a wager for each separate hand to be played by  
7 the player. One hand of five cards is dealt all face up.  
8 The player selects none, one or more of the face up cards  
9 from the first hand as cards to be held. The cards that are  
10 held are reused from the first hand into all of the other  
11 hands. Replacement cards for the non-selected cards are  
12 dealt into the first hand and additional cards are then dealt  
13 to the first hand, if needed, so that the first hand has five  
14 cards. Additional cards are also dealt to all of the other  
15 hands so that each hand is a five card hand. The poker hand  
16 ranking of each five card hand is determined row by row. The  
17 player is then paid for any winning poker hands based on a  
18 pay table and the amount of the player's wager. The most  
19 successful commercial embodiment of this multiple hand method  
20 of play is a three hand game known as TRIPLE PLAY DRAW

1 POKER®, although there as also five hand, ten hand, fifty  
2 hand and even one hundred hand versions of this multiple hand  
3 game.

4 U.S. Patent No. 6,517,074 (Moody et al.) (the disclosure  
5 of which is incorporated herein by this reference) describes  
6 another electronic video gaming machine and method in which  
7 the player may play multiple hands at the same time. The  
8 player makes a wager for each separate hand to be played by  
9 the player. A first hand of five cards is dealt all face up.  
10 The player selects none, one or more of the face up cards  
11 from the first hand as cards to be held. Replacement cards  
12 for the non-selected cards are dealt into the first hand and  
13 the player receives an award for any winning hand  
14 combinations.

15 The original five cards are redisplayed into a second  
16 hand. The player selects none, one or more of the face up  
17 cards from the second hand as cards to be held. Replacement  
18 cards for the non-selected cards are dealt into the second  
19 hand and the player receives an award for any winning hand  
20 combinations. This redisplay of the original hand,

1 discarding and replacement continues until all of the number  
2 of hands selected to be played by the player are completed.

3 U.S. Patent No. 6,050,568 (Hachquet) (the disclosure of  
4 which is incorporated herein by this reference) and U.S.  
5 Patent No. 6,135,883 (Hachquet) (the disclosure of which is  
6 incorporated herein by this reference) each describes yet  
7 another electronic video gaming machine and method in which  
8 the player may play multiple hands at the same time. The  
9 player makes a wager for each separate hand to be played by  
10 the player, for example two hands. Two hands of five cards  
11 are dealt all face up, with each hand having the identical  
12 cards by suit and rank. The player selects none, one or more  
13 of the face up cards from the first hand as cards to be held  
14 and the player selects none, one or more of the face up cards  
15 from the second hand as cards to be held. The cards selected  
16 to be held from each hand may or may not be the same cards.  
17 Replacement cards for the non-selected cards are dealt into  
18 the first hand and replacement cards for the non-selected  
19 cards are dealt into the second hand and the player receives  
20 an award for any winning hand combinations in either or both

1 of the first and second hands.

2 It is an object of the present invention to provide a  
3 new form of an electronic video poker game that provides the  
4 player with one or more additional video poker hands on the  
5 next round of play whenever the player achieves a certain  
6 starting hand combination on the original round of play.

7 It is a feature of the present invention that whenever  
8 the player achieves one of the predetermined types of  
9 starting hand combinations on the original round of play of  
10 video poker, then the player is awarded one or more  
11 additional hands of video poker on the next round of play.  
12 The additional hands of video poker on the next round of play  
13 are played according to the multiple hand poker method  
14 described in U.S. Patent No. 5,823,873; or U.S. Patent No.  
15 6,517,074; or U.S. Patent No. 6,050,568 or U.S. Patent No.  
16 6,135,883. These one or more additional hands can be awarded  
17 with or without the player having to make an additional  
18 wager.

19 It is a further feature of the present invention that  
20 the award of one or more additional hands may continue

1 consecutively as long as the player continues to achieve one  
2 of the predetermined types of starting hand combinations on  
3 the previous round of play of video poker.

4 It is an advantage of the present invention that the  
5 player is provided with one or more additional hands of video  
6 poker to play with having to make only one additional wager.  
7 This increases the player's opportunity to achieve winning  
8 payouts without significantly increasing the monetary risk to  
9 the player.

10 Other objects, features and advantages of the present  
11 invention will become apparent from a consideration of the  
12 following detailed description.

13

14 **Summary of the Invention**

15 The method of the present invention begins with the  
16 player playing a conventional hand of video poker. Whenever  
17 the player achieves one of the predetermined types of  
18 starting hand combinations on the original round of play of  
19 the hand of video poker, then the player is awarded one or  
20 more additional hands of video poker on the next round of

1 play. The additional hands of video poker on the next round  
2 of play are played according to the multiple hand poker  
3 method described in U.S. Patent No. 5,823,873; or U.S. Patent  
4 No. 6,517,074; or U.S. Patent No. 6,050,568 or U.S. Patent  
5 No. 6,135,883.

6 These one or more additional hands can be awarded with  
7 the player having to make only a single additional wager.  
8 The award of one or more additional hands may continue  
9 consecutively as long as the player continues to achieve one  
10 of the predetermined types of winning hand combinations on  
11 the previous round of play of video poker.

12 **Brief Description of the Drawings**

13 Figure 1 shows a representative electronic video gaming  
14 machine of the present invention including a typical screen  
15 display used in the method of play of the present invention  
16 after the initial deal of the cards.

17 Figure 2 shows a representative electronic video gaming  
18 machine of the present invention including a typical screen  
19 display used in the method of play of the present invention  
20 after the player has been awarded additional hands on the

1 next round of play.

2

3                   **Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments**

4         The method of the present invention can be applied to  
5         any poker format used for video poker. Figure 1 shows  
6         generally at 10 a typical electronic video gaming machine  
7         that is configured to provide to the player the method of the  
8         present invention. The electronic video gaming machine 10  
9         includes a conventional coin head 50 into which the player  
10       can insert coins or gaming tokens and a slot 52 which leads  
11       to a conventional bill acceptor mounted on the interior of  
12       the gaming machine and into which the player can insert paper  
13       currency. The use of coins, tokens or paper currency is the  
14       mechanism by which the player wagers on the poker hands the  
15       player wishes to play. As is also conventional in electronic  
16       video gaming machines, a credit meter display 22 is provided  
17       to show the amount of credits that the player has accrued on  
18       the gaming machine 10 -- either by inserting coins, tokens or  
19       paper currency or from winning plays achieved by the player.  
20       Whenever the player makes a wager, the amount of the wager

1 is decremented from the credit meter display 22. Whenever  
2 the player achieves a winning play during the play of the  
3 game, the amount of the winning play is incremented on the  
4 credit meter display 22.

5 A conventional payout hopper is also located on the  
6 interior of the gaming machine and is used to dispense coins  
7 or tokens to the player into a payout tray 56 when the player  
8 wishes to collect any winning amounts the player has accrued.  
9 Other suitable and conventional payout mechanisms can be  
10 used, such as a ticket printer or other cashless payout  
11 devices.

12 The gaming machine 10 also includes a video screen  
13 display 20 of any suitable type upon which representations of  
14 playing cards are displayed. In a preferred embodiment of  
15 the present invention, one or more hands can be displayed on  
16 the video screen display 20 at the same time. As shown in  
17 Figure 1, a first hand: HAND ONE 60 is shown. Each hand  
18 would preferably have five card locations preferably from  
19 left to right in a horizontal row, although other manners of  
20 displaying multiple hands can be used. The video screen

1 display 20 also contains a location at which the amount  
2 wagered on each hand is shown, for example, "Bet Per Hand"  
3 24.

4 A button panel 40 is also provided on the gaming machine  
5 10 and the buttons mounted on the button panel 40 are used by  
6 the player to control the operation of the gaming machine 10.

7 Any suitable configuration of the buttons on the button  
8 panel can be used and, alternatively, conventional touch  
9 screen technology can be used for any or all of the buttons  
10 mounted on the button panel.

11 A typical button arrangement is shown on the button  
12 panel 30 in Figure 1. A "BET" button 42 is provided to allow  
13 the player to wager one credit at a time. A "BET MAX" button  
14 44 is provided to allow the player to wager the maximum  
15 amount of credits permitted by the configuration of the  
16 gaming machine 10. Any number of credits can be set as the  
17 maximum amount that it is possible to wager on each hand and,  
18 typically, five credits will be the maximum number of credits  
19 for any particular hand. Alternatively, a BET location 26  
20 and a BET MAX location 28 can be provided on the video screen

1 20 to allow the player to wager by using conventional touch  
2 screen technology.

3 A conventional "DEAL/DRAW" button 46 is also provided on  
4 the button panel 40 which is used by the player to activate  
5 the initial deal of the cards at the deal stage of the method  
6 of play or the dealing of replacement cards at the draw stage  
7 of the method of play as is appropriate. Similarly, a  
8 DEAL/DRAW location 47 can be provided on the video screen 20  
9 to allow the player to effect either the deal step or the  
10 draw step by using conventional touch screen technology.

11 The button panel 40 is also provided with five "CARD"  
12 buttons 48A, 48B, 48C, 48D and 48E associated with each  
13 horizontal card location on the video screen display: card  
14 button 48A is associated with the left most card location,  
15 card button 48B is associated with the second from the left  
16 card location, card button 48C is associated with the middle  
17 card location, card button 48D is associated with the second  
18 from the right card location and card button 48E is  
19 associated with the right most card location. Each card  
20 button is preferably aligned below the card locations so that

1 the player can easily associate the appropriate card button  
2 with the appropriate card location.

3       The method of play of the various versions of the  
4 present invention will now be described. After the player  
5 has inserted an appropriate amount of coins, tokens or paper  
6 currency to add a sufficient amount of credits on the credit  
7 display meter 22, the player makes his initial wager. The  
8 player may press the BET button 42 one or more times to bet  
9 in single increments or the player may merely press the "BET  
10 MAX" button 44 and the maximum number of credits are applied,  
11 for example, five credits would be wagered. The player can  
12 also use the touch screen locations to make his wager as  
13 described above.

14       The present invention is played using a standard fifty-  
15 two card deck. In alternative embodiments of the present  
16 invention, one or more Jokers may be added to the  
17 conventional deck of playing cards so that poker format games  
18 using Jokers may also be employed.

19       The player makes a wager to participate in the method of  
20 play. A first five card hand, HAND ONE 60 shown in Figure 1,

1 is dealt to the player.

2         Based on achieving certain starting hand combinations,  
3 the player receives one or more extra hands on his next round  
4 of play. This process can continue to allow the extra hands  
5 to create additional extra hands.

6         For example, a starting hand of a Three-of-a-Kind or  
7 better would entitle the player to an extra hand on the next  
8 round of play. When the player engages in the next round of  
9 play, the player makes a single wager and each of the  
10 additional hands are treated as being played for the same  
11 amount of the wager. Thus the player gets to play the extra  
12 hand for no additional cost.

13         For example, if the player bet five credits and the  
14 starting hand was a Flush, the player would receive a free  
15 extra hand on the next deal. Before the next deal occurs,  
16 the player plays out the first deal in accordance with the  
17 method of play of conventional video poker by deciding which  
18 cards he wishes to hold from the first hand. The player is  
19 not required to hold the cards that caused a bonus hand to be  
20 awarded for the next round of play, although in most

1 situations it would be to the player's advantage to do so.

2       After the player has made the selection of which cards  
3 the player wishes to hold, if any, replacement cards are  
4 displayed for the discarded cards in the first hand. The  
5 player is paid for achieving winning poker hand ranking based  
6 on a pay table.

7       The method of play then proceeds on to the next round.  
8 The player preferably would have to make a bet on the first  
9 hand in the next round to receive the extra hand bonus for no  
10 additional cost, although alternatively the player could be  
11 allowed to play the next round without having to make an  
12 additional bet. If the player then was dealt two or more  
13 Three-of-a-Kinds or better on the next round he would receive  
14 two extra hands on the following round and would play a total  
15 of three hands. The play of the extra hands would be  
16 performed according to the method of played described in U.S.  
17 Patent No. 5,823,873. The same cards that are held in the  
18 first hand will also be held in the extra hand or hands and  
19 the player receives replacement cards in each of the hands  
20 and a final poker hand ranking is determined. Winning hand

1 combinations are paid out in accordance with a pay table.

2 Alternatively, the play of the extra hands would be  
3 performed according to the method of play described in U.S.  
4 Patent No. 6,517,074; or U.S. Patent No. 6,050,568 or U.S.  
5 Patent No. 6,135,883.

6 For example, as shown in Figure 1, the player is dealt  
7 the Seven of Spades, the King of Spades, the Queen of Spades,  
8 the Two of Spades and the Four of Spades. Because starting  
9 HAND ONE 60 has the poker hand ranking of Three-of-a-Kind or  
10 better (namely a Flush), the player will receive an  
11 additional bonus hand on the next round of play at no extra  
12 cost.

13 The player then completes the play of HAND ONE 60 most  
14 likely by holding the Flush. Assuming the player had made a  
15 five credit wager, the player would win twenty-five credits  
16 (see Table 1) for achieving a Flush.

17 As shown in Figure 2, if the player made a single five  
18 credit wager on the next round of play, the player would  
19 receive two hands, each being played for five credits. The  
20 player would be dealt the same hand twice and as shown in

1     Figure 2, for example, the player could be dealt in HAND ONE  
2     70 the Four of Spades, the Seven of Diamonds, the Four of  
3     Clubs, the Four of Hearts and the Ace of Spades. HAND TWO 72  
4     would be dealt with the identical cards by suit and rank.

5                 Because the player has been dealt a Three-of-a-Kind in  
6     each of HAND ONE 70 and HAND TWO 72, the player would be  
7     awarded two additional bonus hands on the next round of play  
8     at no extra cost as long as the player makes a wager to play  
9     the first hand of the next round of play.

10               The player then completes the play of HAND ONE 70 and  
11    HAND TWO 72 according to the method of play described in  
12    Moody Patent No. 5,823,873. The same cards that are held in  
13    one of the hands will also be held in the other hand and the  
14    player receives replacement cards in each of the hands and a  
15    final poker hand ranking is determined. Winning hand  
16    combinations are paid out in accordance with a pay table,  
17    such as the pay table shown in Table 1.

18               This method of play continues from round to round and  
19    the player receives additional bonus hands at no extra charge  
20    for each starting hand dealt to the player that has a poker

1 hand ranking of Three-of-a-Kind or better. In theory, a  
2 player who has a lucky streak could be playing five, ten or  
3 even more hands for a single additional wager on each round  
4 of play.

5 Any suitable pay table may be used and would be  
6 associated with the poker format being used by the player.  
7 For example, the classic poker hand format is Jacks or Better  
8 Draw Poker. A suitable pay table for Jacks or Better Draw  
9 Poker is shown in Table 1:

JACKS OR BETTER DRAW POKER	NUMBER OF COINS WAGERED				
POKER HAND RANKING	1	2	3	4	5
ROYAL FLUSH	250	500	750	1000	4000
STRAIGHT FLUSH	50	100	150	200	250
FOUR-OF-A-KIND	25	50	75	100	125
FULL HOUSE	8	16	24	32	40
FLUSH	5	10	15	20	25
STRAIGHT	4	8	12	16	25
THREE-OF-A-KIND	3	6	9	12	15
TWO PAIR	2	4	6	8	10
JACKS OR BETTER	1	2	3	4	5

10

TABLE 1.

1  
2        If the method of any of the versions of the present  
3 invention is used with one of the Joker poker formats, then  
4 the standard deck of playing cards would include one or more  
5 Jokers as would apparent to one skilled in the art and an  
6 appropriate pay table suitable for one of the Joker poker  
7 formats would be used.

8        While the invention has been illustrated with respect to  
9 several specific embodiments thereof, these embodiments  
10 should be considered as illustrative rather than limiting.  
11 Various modifications and additions may be made and will be  
12 apparent to those skilled in the art. Accordingly, the  
13 invention should not be limited by the foregoing description,  
14 but rather should be defined only by the following claims.